لقاء مع أم الفضل زوجة الشيخ الألباني رحمه الله

A Sitting with Umm al-Fadl Wife of Shaikh al-Albaani

May Allaah have mercy on him

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"Could you tell us your name and place of birth?"

Yusraa Abdur-Rahmaan Aabideen, Umm al-Fadl.
Place of birth: Salt [Jordan], and on the birth certificate it mentions Jerusalem, 1929.

"O Khaalah [lit: maternal aunt/aunty], could you tell us about your upbringing up until the time you married the Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him?"

I grew up in Jerusalem, in the area of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. My father worked as a trader, but I never knew him, for he died when I was still young. So I was raised by my brother, Nadhmee, may Allaah have mercy on him.

I remained in Jerusalem until 1948, after which I moved for good to Jordan. The Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him, proposed to me in 1981. I used to live in North Marca, so he took me to South Marca, a place I had [already] wanted to get to know more about, so the Shaikh caused me to settle there, may Allaah the Most High have mercy on him.

The Shaikh married his first wife, Umm Abdur-Rahmaan in Damascus, she was Yugoslavian. She gave birth to Abdur-Rahmaan, Abdul-Lateef and Abdur-Razzaaq, and others [too] who Allaah caused to pass away. Then she too passed away.

The Shaikh then married his second wife, Naajiyah, she was also Yugoslavian. He had nine children with her, four boys and five girls. The boys were: Abdul-Musowwir, Abdul-A'laa, Muhammad and Abdul-Muhaimin. The girls: Aneesah, Aasiyah, Salaamah, Hassaanah and Sukainah.

He married the third while he had been married to the second for about two years. Her name is Khadijah al-Qaadiri and she is Syrian. She is the sister of Dr. Muhammad Ameen al-Misri's wife, may Allaah have mercy on him, the well-known teacher at the Islamic University of Madinah, and a friend of the Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on them both.

The Shaikh had one daughter from his wife Khadijah, Hibatullaah. And he divorced his second wife who he used to live with in the Yarmouk Camp in Damascus.

Then he migrated with Khadijah to Jordan in 1980 and settled in South Marca, Amman, close to Shaikh Ahmad Atiyah who was from the closest of people to the Shaikh. [But] then Ahmad Atiyah separated himself from Shaikh al-Albaani and his methodology, and became a *Sufi*, and then he embraced Baha'ism. We ask Allaah for well-being.

His third wife, Khadijah only stayed in Amman for a short while after which she moved to Damascus and refused to reside in Amman. After approximately six months, the Shaikh sent divorce papers to her and she returned their joint-passport which was with her to him.

Ahmad Atiyah, along with his cousin, Shaikh Jameel, came to South Marca to my brother's shop and asked him for my hand in marriage [on behalf of the Shaikh] in 1981.

We finalised the marriage contract [i.e., the *nikaah*], in my cousin's house in Marca. The Shaikh stipulated the dowry himself! For he informed us that this was the legislated [thing to do]–i.e., that the one proposing marriage stipulates that which he sees fit so that the dowry for his wife will be within his means, so he gave me two hundred dinaars at that time. And he did not stipulate a delayed dowry, for that is not from the *Sunnah*.

I went with him to the market and we bought some non-circular gold with the dowry, since he did not hold it to be permissible to wear circular gold.

We agreed to get married [i.e., that she would go and live with him] after about two months after the Shaikh would finish building his new house in South Marca. We got married half way through the blessed month of Ramadaan.

"Can you, O Khaalah, tell us briefly about the times the Shaikh had to relocate?"

The Shaikh emigrated from Albania with his father to Damascus when he was about ten years old. He then emigrated to Jordan in 1980 and settled in South Marca, Amman. Then he was compelled to go back to Damascus and from there to

Beirut, Lebanon, in 1981. Shaikh Zuhair ash-Shaaweesh hosted him there in his house. After that he travelled to Sharjah and stayed there for two months, calling to the *Salafi manhaj*. After which he went to Qatar for one month, then Kuwait, staying there for ten days. Then Sharjah and from there back to Jordan where he stayed until he passed away on Saturday, 2/10/1999.

"Being the wife of this noble scholar, did you see that his knowledge, seeking knowledge and teaching it to the people took away from his coexistence with you as the head of your household? And did this have a negative effect on his children? And my dear mother, can I ask you to single me out with some supplication for I am in dire need of it. May Allaah protect you and give you good."

Wa alaikum Salaam wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatuhu. I thank you for your warm sentiments and I want to let you know that seeking knowledge would not prevent the Shaikh from carrying out any of his family obligations.

Rather, the total opposite was true.

For he, may Allaah have mercy on him, was an exemplary head of a household, cooperating with his family.

And believe me, my son, he used to help me a great deal in the household chores such that I would feel embarrassed in front of him due to it. So much so that one time he was cleaning the patio with me, to which I said, 'O Shaikh! Don't disgrace me in front of the neighbours, they will say that you are doing your wife's work.' He replied, 'This is not a disgrace. Don't you know that the Prophet (ﷺ) would be at the service of his family?'

When I would ask him for anything [I needed] for the house, for example, an extra shelf somewhere, he would assess the situation and think about it and if he found that it was appropriate he would go ahead with it and do it with his own hands. And if he needed to go and buy something for it, he would do so in his car and then come back and do what I had requested of him.

One of his hobbies was to go on trips, may Allaah have mercy on him, like Syrians do, the [picnic] basket was always in the car. We would go together in spring, summer, even winter, looking at the snow and [the] wintertime [landscape]. He would complement me by drinking tea and coffee, even though it was not his habit to drink either of them.

But he would never leave his books on any outing we would go on. Books were his companions wherever he went.

In fact, there were many times when I would wake up and would not see him on the bed. So I would look for him and find him in his study, having turned on the lamp, engrossed in his books. I'd be surprised and he would say, 'These are my beloved!' May Allaah have mercy on him.

May Allaah grant you succees, remove your distress and calamity and make you from those happy in this world and the Hereafter. *Aameen*.

"Our noble mother, we'd like you to give us a description of a complete day from his life, may Allaah have mercy on him, from the time he would wake up for fajr until the time he'd go to bed at night."

A description of a full day from the Shaikh's life. The Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him, would wake up for the morning prayer, if not before it, and would also wake some of his students through the phone. Then he would, as long as he was physically able, go and take his students from their houses or from the road where they'd be waiting for him. They would pray the morning prayer in a mosque where the Imaam would strive to implement the *Sunnah* and shun innovations, like the *qunoot* in *fajr*, and most of the time the mosque was far away from our area.

Then if there was no sitting with his students in the mosque, the Shaikh would come back to his library and stay there amongst his books and his research up until seven o'clock in the morning at which time I would have prepared some breakfast for him. So he would take his breakfast and then return to his library and stay there until it was time for the siesta [*qailulah*], which was when the Shaikh would begin to feel sleepy. So he would go and sleep for a short while and then return to his library.

And this was how his lunch would be too, at one o'clock. As for dinner, then the Shaikh would not desire it. He would answer calls on the phone after *ishaa* prayer, for he had appointed two hours for issuing religious verdicts on the phone. As for visits, he had set the time between *maghrib* and *ishaa* for them during the days when his circumstances would allow him to do so.

"How would the Shaikh react to what the Islamic nation was going through and what affect did that have on him?"

As for the reaction of the Shaikh to what was occurring in the Islamic *ummah*, then we did not have a television in the house, because the Shaikh did not want to bring that upon us, and he wouldn't buy newspapers but [at the same time] he would be extremely hurt at what was happening to the Muslims in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan and the other Islamic countries.

And he was often moved by his Muslim brothers in Syria at the time of the events that occurred in the eighties with the Alawites. Since many times the Muslim youth would come to him and seek his counsel and he would honour them and receive them in the best way possible.

"Our noble mother, did you have a role to play with regard to the level that our scholar and Shaikh, al-Albaani, reached in terms of excellence and knowledge in the religion of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ). Because this concerns us greatly, how can we encourage and help our brothers and families in seeking knowledge? Was there a piece of research or an opinion in a matter or point of knowledge that may have popped up that was shared between you and the Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him, and did you benefit from his knowledge? Your daughter and someone who loves you for the sake of Allaah."

As for benefitting from [his] knowledge, then all praise is due to Allaah, we benefitted vastly from him. In fact, my family, Aal-Aabideen, and others benefitted from him after we got married. Many times people will ask me about a legislative ruling so I say, 'The Shaikh used to say such and such about that,' and if I don't know, [then] on their behalf I ask some of the Shaikh's students who were close to him and who he trusted.

As for my role in his knowledge, then I am not even a student of knowledge, and how can someone like me share with him in his knowledge and his precise knowledge-based research?

But I used to prepare the environment for him, as they say, as much as I was able to. I would serve him, his guests and his students as much as I could, for he did not have a maid and he would never accept having a maid in the house.

May Allaah grant you success, *was-salaamu alaikum*.

"What effect did leaving Medinah al-Munawwarah have on our great scholar, i.e., when he moved from there?"

The Shaikh was greatly affected when he left Medinah an-Nabawiyyah. He used to regard the days he spent in the City of the Prophet (ﷺ) as the best of his life. But [at the same time] that did not ever stop him from continuing in his knowledge-based projects.

"What is the most distinguished Islamic event that he participated in while residing in Medinah al-Munawwrah?"

As for the most distinguished Islamic even that occurred there then I do not know for I was not with him.

"In the opinion of our Khaalah, Umm al-Fadl, how do we honour a great scholar like him?"

As for honouring the Shaikh then there is nothing like supplicating for him and adhering to the methodology which he would always call to and which he would summarise in two words: purification and cultivation. Namely, purifying the methodology of the Muslims and their heritage from the innovations, heretical superstitions [*khuraafaat*] and weak *hadiths* and so on, while cultivating [the people] upon the true methodology and the upright religion. The Shaikh used to regard one of the greatest problems of the Muslims, especially those who claim to be following the *Sunnah*, to be correct cultivation upon the sound methodology. And by and large, this cultivation requires a long period of time and great effort.

"Do you feel the extent of the love of the Muslims for your husband, may Allaah have mercy on him, or do you feel that they have fallen short in that?"

Yes, my children, I know the extent of the people's love for the Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him, but I want them to always remember him by supplicating for him, [asking] that Allaah reward him with the best of rewards on behalf of the Muslims.

I personally bought a small apartment opposite the graveyard in which he was buried in South Marca, Amman. And believe me, I always wake up at night and look at the graveyard and supplicate for him and his student Abu Mu'aadh and the daughter of our brother Abul-Yamaan, Sumayyah, may Allaah have mercy on them all. And may Allaah have mercy on all of the deceased Muslims, and may He gather us with them in Paradise with the Chief of the Messengers. *Aameen*.

"How can we, when we are deprived of the presence of a great scholar amongst us, recall the times that the great Shaikh would give his lectures when we were not present at those lectures whose loss to us Allaah knows the extent of?"

My brother, it is possible for you to recall those beautiful times with the Shaikh through his recorded tapes which are widespread and in their thousands, the same goes for his books in the Islamic bookshops.

"Did any of the Shaikh's sons take their fathers lead in seeking knowledge and excelling in the Science of Hadith? And did the Shaikh have an effect in that?"

The one who followed his lead the most in the science of *hadith* was his daughter, Umm Abdullaah, may Allaah protect her.

"I ask that you don't deprive us ladies of advice on what our role in nurturing a generation of those who strive should be? And I repeat my thanks and gratitude to those who came up with this idea and strove to implement it."

My advice to my daughters, the Muslim girls, is that they fear Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, and learn their religion especially that which concerns the Muslim woman's role in her home and such circumstances, and that which is connected to

raising their children. And that the Muslim sister concentrate on the affairs of her household, on nurturing her children herself, and taking care of her husband, in compliance with the Saying of the Most High, **"… and stay in your houses …"** [Al-Ahzaab 33:33]. And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'When the woman prays her five, fasts her month, guards her chastity, obeys her husband, it is said to her, 'Enter Paradise from whichever gate you wish,' what more do you want?

"What was the reaction of the Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him, to those people of unsound creed who are widespread in Jordan and other countries when they would attack and lie against him in the newspapers and other such media?"

The Shaikh would treat those who attacked and lied against him as noble people do, [their example is that] of an ibex striking a rock with its horns, [in the end it only weakens its own antlers].

And I remember one time I was with him in the car, and he had turned on the cassette of a sermon delivered by a man who was attacking and lying upon the Shaikh and declaring him to be a disbeliever and so on, may Allaah have mercy on him.

I was about to explode in rage.

I was watching the Shaikh [i.e, his reaction] and it was as though nothing had happened! Until I [finally] said to him, 'What is wrong with you? Can you hear what he is saying?' So he signalled to me that it's no problem, don't worry about it.

The important thing is that Allaah accepts it, may Allaah have mercy on him and make both us and you from those whose actions are accepted.

"There must be a situation which affected the Shaikh in a big way. Something whose effect on the Shaikh can't be forgotten, can you tell us what such an occurrence was, whether happy or sad?"

As for that which occurred in my time and which greatly affected the Shaikh,

then it was his disagreement with Shaikh Zuhair ash-Shaaweesh, may Allaah protect him. And that is because Shaikh Zuhair was from the closest of people to the Shaikh and the most beloved. And disputes with the people you love and are devoted to is something which will always affect a person.

I ask Allaah to have mercy on both Shaikhs and to forgive them both, and to gather them in the Gardens of Eternal Bliss. *Aameen*.

"As-Salaamu alaikum wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatuhu. My noble mother, how would the Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him, gather between da'wah and lessons [he taught] and his wife, home and the upbringing of his children?"

Wa alaikum salaam wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatuhu wa maghfiratuhu. The Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him, was very organised in his time, and he would often say, 'My profession as a watch-maker taught me precision and organisation.' He would not let anything from his affairs overtake something else, everything had its turn.

"What is the story of his exit from the Emirates and Saudia and [the fact that] he was refused entry into Jordan and waited at the borders until someone of high standing in Jordan took on his case, I wish we could get to know that story, if you would be so kind as to tell us."

As for the story about his exit from Jordan: then the Shaikh, may Allaah have mercy on him, was expelled from it in 1982 to Syria whose government was after him such that the secret service gave him a piece of paper asking him to return to them [on a certain date], but the Shaikh sought the counsel of his brothers in Syria and immediately left for Beirut where his friend–at that time–Shaikh Zuhair ash-Shaaweesh received him. He remained as a guest with him for about three months then one of his students hosted him in the Emirates in Sharjah so we went to him for about two months. And we went to Qatar for a month, staying at the Waahah hotel. Then [we stayed in] Kuwait for ten days, then the Emirates.

At that time Shaikh Muhammad Ibrahim Shaqrah was trying to get him back to Jordan using the highest channels that understood the situation of the Shaikh and his standing in knowledge and service to the Prophetic *Sunnah*. So they allowed him to return to Jordan … we came back by way of the airport and there was no waiting at the borders as you mentioned. And we will not forget the effort of Shaikh Abu Malik Shaqrah in that; Shaikh al-Albaani would acknowledge that about him, all the way to the end of his life, may Allaah reward him with good. May Allaah have mercy on the Shaikh and record that deed in his scale of good.

As for Shaikh al-Albaani himself then he didn't have any connection with those politicians in authority in the Arab and Islamic lands whatsoever. And he would always follow the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), 'Whoever goes to the doors of the ruler, will be put to trial.'

"After reading through his biography, may Allaah have mercy on him, [I came to know that] he wrote in his will that his books should be bequeathed to Medinah al-Munowwarah. But didn't anything of his remain in his house, like his notes or papers he may have written which he never completed, his mushaf, so that we can get to know what is in such documents and other than them which he may not have completed? May Allaah bless you."

Yes, the Shaikh bequeathed all of his books and his papers which he had written with his own hand and his manuscripts to the library at the Islamic University in Medinah al-Munowwarah. Nothing from that remained in his house. The Shaikh didn't have notebooks [as such], his notebooks were his books and treatises in which he would put down summaries of his thoughts and experience. The Shaikh didn't have a specific *mushaf*, rather we had many *mushafs* in the house which we would read.

As for other than that which he did not complete, then they are many, and they are his knowledge-based projects which need many times the life of the Shaikh to be completed. We ask Allaah to prepare from the Muslims those who will complete them and reward them on behalf of the Muslims with the best reward.

"We've heard of a situation which caused him to cry, so what is the situation which made him laugh, may Allaah have mercy on him?"

As for the situations that made him laugh, may Allaah have mercy on him, then the Shaikh would only laugh a little, may Allaah have mercy on him, and he would not become happy at anything from the affairs of the world, rather he would become pleased at the obedience of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic and aiding the Prophetic *Sunnah*.

To the extent that when the news of the King Faisal Award came to him no signs of happiness were seen on him at all, rather he said, 'It came late.' For it came at the start of his illness from which he died, may Allaah have mercy on him.

And the Shaikh did not have an account in any of the banks which were widespread [i.e., easily accessible]. And he refused to open a bank account to receive the prize money for the King Faisal Award which Shaikh Abu Maalik Shaqrah, may Allaah protect him, received on his behalf.